

Meeting Minutes

Project: Upper Platte River Basin Water Management Plan– Single Planning Group

Subject: Orient and Prepare Meeting - II

Date: Wednesday, July 20, 2016

Location: Holiday Inn Express & Suites – North Platte, NE

Attendees: See Sign-in Sheet

These minutes correspond to detailed slides that were presented at the meeting and can be found online at www.dnr.nebraska.gov/iwm/upbwp

- I. Introductions
- II. Logistics/Process
 - a. Reviewed Open Meetings Act compliance, discussed safety-related items, reviewed facilitation process and logistics, and discussed stakeholder membership and responsibilities.
- III. Review of First Increment Basin-wide Plan goals and objectives – Led by John Engel, HDR.
 - a. Goals and objectives from the first increment Basin-wide Plan were reviewed. Questions arose regarding basis and significance of the year 1997 and its multiple references in the first increment goals and objectives. J. Schellpeper stated that 1997 was the year the Platte River Cooperative Agreement was signed. 1997 was included in the LB 962 language and is explicitly referenced in the governing state statutes.
- IV. Implementation During the First Increment – Presentations were given by each NRD and the NeDNR and can be found in the meeting PowerPoint presentation. Below is a summary of the questions and discussion pertaining to each presentation.
 - a. North Platte NRD – Barb Cross and Tracy Zayac, NPNRD
 - i. How successful have actions been? The robust review currently being conducted will provide that information
 - ii. How are COHYST/WWUM model differences resolved? The western unit of the original COHYST model served as the basis from which the WWUM was developed. The WWUM model is used to inform water management decisions in the NPNRD.
 - iii. How does the NPNRD handle groundwater transfers? NPNRD generally discourages transfers, because NPNRD is mindful of possible interference with surface water appropriators when evaluating potential transfers. Transfers that are permitted are required to offset any increases in depletions resulting from the transfer.
 - iv. Is there a 'buy-down' for allocation? Yes, \$20 per acre-inch

- v. What is the impact of lower valuations on retired acres? NPNRD irrigated acre valuations are typically \$2700 - \$3000 per acre. Pasture or dry land valuations are \$500 - \$700 per acre. NPNRD is cognizant of potential impacts on entities that rely on property tax revenues.
 - vi. Costs of temporary and permanent acreage retirements? Temporary (5-yrs typically) are \$150-\$175 per acre-foot; Permanent are up to \$250 per acre-foot
 - vii. How did the allocation time periods (1-yr, then 3-yr, now 5-yr) develop? Through producer and board member feedback – extended duration provides producers more flexibility.
- b. South Platte NRD – Rod Horn, SPNRD
- i. What are the SPNRD offset targets for the South Platte River? The SPNRD's offset target is 700 AF total – 400 AF to the South Platte River, 150 AF to Lodgepole Creek, 150 AF to the North Platte River.
 - ii. What are differences between COHYST and WWUM? The western unit of the original COHYST model served as the basis from which the WWUM was developed. Additions incorporated into the WWUM include a surface water operations component and incorporation of additional land use and metering data.
 - iii. What recharge efforts have SPNRD been involved in? Thirty percent of Western Irrigation District is in SPNRD. Two recharge pits and the main canal within district boundaries have been used.
 - iv. Are there new results from the WWUM and COHYST models that update old information? Yes, the new models are being used in the robust review and that information will be made available.
 - v. How does municipality water usage fit in? A baseline for municipal water use has been established and the NRD is responsible for addressing water use over that baseline until 2026, according to statute. If a municipality city limits grow into previously irrigated acres, the consumptive use of those acres can accrue to the NRD and be used to address additional depletions. The SPNRD groundwater management plan prohibits transfers within specified miles of any city limit and within the city limit.
- c. Twin Platte NRD – Ann Dimmitt, TPNRD
- i. What is J-2 reference on TPNRD “balance sheet”? J-2 refers to one of the PRRIP proposed water action plan projects involving a new regulating reservoir on CNPPID Tri-County canal system.
 - ii. On the “balance sheet” why the drop off in CRP credits? Those are temporary contracts with a sunset date.
 - iii. What is the purchase price for offset credits from CPNRD? \$35 per AF, with a 7% annual raise.
 - iv. What is the significance of 7,700 AF on the “balance sheet”? That is the post-1997 depletions estimate for uses within TPNRD that needs to be offset.
- d. Tri-Basin NRD – John Thorburn, TBNRD
- i. Are there wells within TBNRD where drawdown is an issue? Seasonally maybe, but generally not an issue in TBNRD. Seepage from CNPPID surface water canal system operations has created a ground water ‘mound’ in some areas of TBNRD.

- ii. Why were E-65 and Phelps canals used for recharge in 2013-2015? Elwood reservoir and E-65 are the preferred recharge facilities – quantity of available excess flows can dictate what facilities are used.
- e. Central Platte NRD – Lyndon Vogt, CPNRD
 - i. As we go through this planning process should other changes/restrictions, such as drought provisions, be included? Not sure if specific changes or means to address droughts are necessary in the plan. Conjunctive management projects and activities undertaken in the first increment have helped to prepare and manage during droughts.
 - ii. General changes in plan necessary? Overall, the existing plan has been pretty good. Need to incorporate the longer term objective of reaching fully appropriated into the plan, as well as the results and new data from additional studies and updated modeling tools.
 - iii. When did COHYST and WWUM start, how is the overlying area between the two models addressed, and what improvements have been made to the models? COHYST initial efforts began in 1998 and consisted of an eastern, central, and western model unit – extending from Duncan to Wyoming. In 2009, the COHYST group started implementing enhancements to the original eastern and central model units, while the WWUM model group started a similar process for the area of the western model unit, using the original COHYST model as a basis. The surface water system in the overlapping area between the two models has a fairly clear division at Lake McConaughy. The link between the two models is the ground water fluxes at the boundaries and the surface water inflows to Lake McConaughy. Enhancements to the models have included incorporation of surface water operations, additional data for calibration, and coding enhancements to improve model performance.
- f. Nebraska DNR – Jennifer Schellpeper, NeDNR
 - i. No questions were asked.

Following completion of the NRD and NeDNR summaries, K. Koupal of NG&PC provided some thoughts from his group's perspective:

- It was a positive sign that the request was made by the group at the June stakeholder meeting for a conservation group's perspective.
- The process and stakeholders are reliant upon the models for determining impacts to streamflows.
- One success story was the coordination with TBNRD on the North Dry Creek augmentation project and the effects on the fish community have been noticeable.
- Invasive species such as phragmites, silver carp, zebra mussels, quahog snails – are a concern, especially for trans-basin diversions.
- They have seen enough progress and are confident enough in the basin stakeholders and managers that they have allocated financial resources to recreational projects in the area.

K. Koupal was asked if his agency had input on PRRIP target flows. K. Koupal indicated that they participate on various PRRIP committees, but not directly on the PRRIP governance committee.

- V. Summary of Implementation with respect to First Increment Basin-wide Plan goals and objectives – J. Engel presented a summary of activities in relation to the current plan goals and objectives. A question arose whether any specific conflicts between surface water and ground water uses had been identified at the annual Basin-wide meetings. CNPPID has submitted several letters to NeDNR for their consideration, requesting the depletive effects of groundwater uses in the Upper North Platte River basin be further investigated. The response to CNPPID has been that the statutory requirements were being met and nothing additional was required at this time.
- VI. New information available – J. Engel summarized the additional data, studies, and tools that had been completed or updated during the first increment. A request was made to add the goals and a summary of results for each of the studies identified.
- VII. Additional information requests
 - a. A report card of first increment activities and their effectiveness in meeting plan goals and objectives.
 - b. A summary of study goals and results
 - c. A summary of first increment activities that worked the best
 - d. A glossary/acronym table of commonly used terms
 - e. A summary of model updates and updated estimates of post-1997 depletionsGeneral requests included:
 - f. Handouts using 2 slides per page
 - g. Possible to boost Wifi signal?
- VIII. Next Steps – Next single planning group meeting scheduled for September 21, 2016. This will be the first of the Goals meetings.
- IX. Public Comment - None

Meeting Date: 7-20-16



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Meeting Date: _____



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